

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-20 (cancelled).

21 (currently amended). A method of stirring one or more materials in an apparatus, which method comprises:

(i) providing an apparatus comprising a vessel having a conduit extending therefrom, which conduit is a tube of cylindrical inner diameter at the base of which is a conduit valve which allows the bottom of the conduit to be sealed, and a stirrer, a section of which is adapted to be located within the conduit and a section of which is adapted to be located within the vessel, wherein said stirrer is adapted such that, when rotated in a first direction, material contained within the conduit is conveyed in a direction towards the vessel, and when rotated in a second direction, material contained within the conduit is conveyed through the conduit in a direction away from the vessel,

(ii) providing one or more materials in the vessel,

(iii) stirring said one or more materials using the stirrer, wherein with the conduit valve closed, the stirrer is configured to turn in the first direction such that the stirrer stirs the materials in the vessel, whilst the section of the stirrer which is adapted to be located within the conduit rotates such that material that may fall into the conduit is conveyed back in to the vessel, and

(iv) reversing the direction of the stirrer and opening the conduit valve when it is desired to remove material from the vessel.

22 (previously presented). A method according to claim 21 wherein the vessel is a batch reactor of from 1 ml and up to 500 ml in volume.